



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

### *TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE* *March 4, 2009*

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Testimony Supporting

#### H. B. No. 6386 AN ACT DELAYING IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION RAISING THE AGE OF JUVENILE JURISDICTION

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Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on House Bill No. 6386 AN ACT DELAYING IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION RAISING THE AGE OF JUVENILE JURISDICTION.

In the 2007 June special session, the General Assembly changed the age of juvenile jurisdiction. This important initiative will significantly alter the existing juvenile courts by potentially doubling the number of juveniles that these courts handle annually. The juvenile jurisdiction change is to go into effect January 1, 2010. The Office of Policy and Management, and all of the effected executive branch agencies, have been working diligently with the Juvenile Jurisdiction Policy Operations Coordinating Council (JJPOCC) to determine the final implementation plan and has identified some of the significant costs necessary to complete this change effectively. Based upon the work of the JJPOCC and budget requests submitted by the effected agencies, OPM estimates that the annualized costs for this change to be \$75 million dollars. This estimate does not include fringe costs, services for those who reach the age of 18 but are still in the juvenile justice system, any additional municipal costs and other areas to be defined through the JJPOCC implementation plan.

In consideration of the state's economic condition and the continuing effort to finalize the implementation plan, the Governor believes that this initiative should be delayed for two years with a new effect date of January 1, 2012. The delay will also allow for municipal impact to be further analyzed and the necessary capital improvements to be completed at both the local and state level.

It is important that in all planning efforts for this initiative the issue of the impact on municipalities be fully addressed. In findings presented to the JJPOCC, OPM's Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division surveyed municipal police departments in June 2008 regarding the cost impact due to the juvenile jurisdictional age change. Of the 30 departments that completed and returned the survey, 20 reported a need to renovate/remodel their facility. Of these same 30 departments, 24 reported the need to add additional staff and/or increase. We believe those costs would be experienced on some level by all of the approximately 90 local police departments and the state police. It is important in the difficult fiscal times that state government be conscious of the impact that its actions have on the municipalities.

The effected agencies will continue to plan for the implementation of the initiative. Once the implementation plan is finalized, there may be a need to expand facilities to accommodate the changes associated with this endeavor. This delay will allow for the agencies and the Judicial Branch to address these issues.

The change in the age of juvenile jurisdiction is an important initiative for the State of Connecticut. It is imperative that it be properly funded for it to have its desired benefits.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on this important matter. We ask for the committee's favorable consideration.